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## Women Mastering Trade Rules

Market trading is a vital lifeline for most people in the South. Plenty of delights usually await people in the market, where live animals, herbs and spices, fresh fruits and vegetables, and life's necessities compete for customers' money. The formal and informal food sector plays a crucial role in empowering women and providing food to the poor. Women are often those mostly responsible for selling fresh products and street food, and running small catering operations. By being a vendor and getting food at a lower cost, they are able to contribute to their families' food security.

Trading and selling in the marketplace can be one of the best options for poor women. By trading, women gain economic independence, learn vital business skills and enjoy the social benefits of interacting with others. But the highly individualistic nature of market trading has its downside: traders must do everything themselves and a day not spent at market is a day's income lost. They also can only buy in small quantities, and usually pay a higher price. Or don't know what the competitive price is, so are in a weaker bargaining position with wholesalers.

Making market trading more efficient has huge advantages, the primary one being more money for the trader.

Women market traders in Nigeria are improving their efficiency and income with mobile phones. Rural women market traders in the [Obiaruku market](#) are using mobile phones to call their suppliers, access information like commodity prices, and contact customers. A survey of the traders found 95 per cent thought mobile phones had a big impact on their business. This has included fewer trips to suppliers, a quicker way to get help when they have been robbed, and opportunities to top-up incomes by selling airtime, handsets or mobile phone accessories.

In Nigeria, mobile phone use has shot up at a rate of 25 per cent a year. A recent study found that out of a population of 140 million, 12.1 million now have mobile phones and 64 million use [mobile phones through street-side phone centres](#). Phones are also helping women market traders to keep tabs on price fluctuations - giving them an advantage when bargaining with crafty - mostly male - suppliers. A weak bargaining position is a common problem: In Ghana, for example, product producers are forced to sell through "market queens" who take advantage of the lack of price transparency and do not always pay producers fairly (De Lardemelle, 1995).

In the Madurai region in southern India, women market traders are using a system called [CAM](#). It allows them to record all their business transactions. CAM uses a Nokia 6600 mobile phone to record daily transactions. This includes small loans, buying livestock, or operating tiny retail businesses. The phone's camera takes pictures of bookkeeping forms to identify and track all documents. The phone then asks the user to input numbers to the data fields. At the last key, the data is sent via text message to a central server. According to Tapan Parikh, a professor at the University of California at Berkeley School of Information in the United States, the most successful technological solutions work because they include village leaders, customers, NGOs, and others in the design process. "This is the only way to ensure long-term sustainability and benefit," he said.

In Soweto, South Africa a simple solution to a chronic problem for women market traders has emerged. After seeing hundreds and sometimes thousands of women selling their goods in the marketplace, it became clear they all had one thing in common: they closed on Mondays. They did this because they needed to go to the wholesaler to buy their goods. And they mostly did this by piling into taxis

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to get there. It hurt the profitability of their businesses in many ways: there was the cost of the taxi, the fact they could only buy small amounts to squeeze in the taxi, a day's business was lost, and the lack of a discounted, bulk price.

But the solution to this problem is a bright one: the women place a bulk, wholesale order with a go-between who works with a computer out of a former shipping container. He logs the orders into his computer and sends one big order. The wholesaler is happy with the big order, and delivers it and gives him a 15 per cent discount. This is his profit. The women pay the same price as before, but do not have to pay for the taxi and the goods are delivered directly to them. On top of this, the women can stay open on Monday and make more money!

**LINKS:**

- Book on how mobile phones are empowering women in Nigeria - Mobile Telephony: Leveraging Strengths and Opportunities for Socio-Economic Transformation in Nigeria.  
Website: <http://mobileactive.org/book-review-nigeria-goes-mobile>
- Business Action for Africa: This is a network of businesses and business organisations working collectively to accelerate growth and poverty reduction in Africa.  
Blog: <http://www.businessactionforafrica.blogspot.com/>  
Website: <http://www.businessactionforafrica.org/>

## Combating Counterfeit Drugs

Access to good quality drugs is a serious problem across the South. The International Narcotics Control Board estimates that up to 15 per cent of all drugs sold around the world are fake or counterfeit, and in parts of Africa and Asia this figure jumps to 50 per cent. The US Food and Drug Administration estimates counterfeit drugs make up 10 per cent of the global medicine market. The US Centre for Medicines in the Public Interest predicts counterfeit drug sales will reach US \$75 billion globally in 2010, an increase of more than 90 per cent from 2005.

Fake drugs are a major cause of unnecessary death and destroy public confidence in medicines and health services. While counterfeit drugs have been on the rise, there is little co-ordinated or effective action to counter this menace afflicted on the sick.

But in Ghana, a solution has emerged that shows a way to guarantee that quality drugs get to the sick who need them. CareShop Ghana uses the franchise model - where licenses are sold to approved vendors who adhere to strict guidelines - to ensure that the quality, accessibility and affordability of essential medicines in and around Accra is guaranteed. CareShop has made deals with close to 300 franchisee pharmacies - often modest operations - who sell over-the-counter drugs.

In Ghana, preventable and curable illnesses like malaria and diarrhoeal diseases are among the leading causes of death. Their treatment pushes many people to financial despair; they can ill afford the extra burden of worrying about counterfeit drugs and the harm they do. Like many countries in the South, Ghana's public healthcare system is unable to meet these needs and so most people turn to the private sector for help.

An estimated 65 per cent of people turn to licensed pharmacies. But many of these operate haphazard businesses, dispensing expired or counterfeit drugs.

The Ghana Social Marketing Foundation Enterprises Limited (GSMFEL) founded CareShop in 2002, hoping to battle common infectious diseases in poor areas by making sure good drugs get through to the sick.

GSMFEL makes a small profit as the franchisor by selling high-quality drugs to the franchisees. The key to CareShop's success is imposing standardization on franchisees, so they have to stick to common diagnosis, quality and pricing. They make more money when they adhere to these rules than when they break them. To ensure there is no tampering with the drugs, they are delivered straight to the vendor's doorstep, and it is all backed up with health and business training support and branded materials.

The tide can be turned around on fake drugs: in 2002, the WHO reported that 70 per cent of drugs in Nigeria were fake or substandard; by 2004 that figure had fallen to 48 per cent.

Stimulating private sector solutions to African healthcare problems is now receiving an additional boost from a new fund established by the World Bank's private sector arm, the International Finance Corporation. Launched in 2007, it offers cash and loans totalling US \$500 million to commercial healthcare projects in Africa. According to its own statistics, 60 per cent of health expenditure in sub-Saharan Africa is privately funded, and the market, excluding South Africa, is worth US \$19 billion.

**LINKS:**

- SafeMedicines.org is a website offering the latest reports on fake medicines and is a good place to report incidences.

**Website:** [http://safemedicines.org/in\\_the\\_news/](http://safemedicines.org/in_the_news/)

- A paper on the global threat of counterfeit drugs: Click [here](#).

## Rainforest Rubbers Save Lives

Two development goals are being achieved with one innovative business in Brazil. By using natural rubber tapped from trees in the Amazon rainforest to make condoms, Brazil is able to afford the cost of distributing condoms to tackle its HIV/AIDS crisis. Brazil currently imports more than 120 million condoms every year from China, Republic of Korea and Thailand, making it the world's biggest single buyer of condoms. The government gives them away for free as part of a national campaign to combat HIV. More than 620,000 people in Brazil are living with HIV out of a population of more than 186 million (UNAIDS, 2005).

The Natex company, co-owned by the public health ministry and the north-western state government of Acre, has established a factory to turn rubber from the world's biggest rainforest into condoms. The business has created 500 jobs at the factory and 150 jobs for the local indigenous population - [the Xapuri](#) - who are traditional rubber tappers.

The factory hopes to produce 100 million condoms a year from local rubber - just 20 million shy of all the condoms the country currently has to import - and could even reach 270 million at full capacity.

"This product will allow people to make love with security and to better plan their futures," said Raimundo Barros, vice president of the local agricultural association.

The 15,000 Xapuri people who live on the Chico Mendes reserve - named after a conservationist and rubber tapper murdered by ranchers in 1988 - tap seringai trees, which produce rubber that is said to be a more effective barrier to the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), than synthetic rubber condoms.

The factory's 500 employees will earn a total of Reais \$2.2 million (US \$1.3 million) while the tappers will see their income increase by 250 per cent as demand goes up for the rubber, according to Natex.

"Because of this I've managed to buy a few cows and give my family a better life," rubber tapper Hugo Paz de Souza, 43, told local newspaper Pagina 20. Paz de Souza said the factory will double his income to US \$394 a month.

The fact the trees will be saved because of their value as sources of rubber is a great boon to the world's environment. The trees in the Amazon rainforest - the "world's lungs" as some call it - face the threat of being chopped down to make way for Brazil's booming agricultural economy. Official figures released in January 2008 showed that between August and December 2007, about 2,700 square miles were chopped down illegally in the Amazon rainforest. It was the first increase in deforestation after three years of declines and coincided with a rise in global food prices.

Marina Silva, Brazil's environment minister, told the Guardian newspaper the Natex condom would help create "a new pattern of production and a new process of inclusion that would value the forest being left standing".

### LINKS:

- The Brazilian health ministry -  
**Website:** <http://portal.saude.gov.br/saude/>
- More news on developments in the state of Acre -  
**Website:** <http://www.agenciadenoticias.ac.gov.br/>
- An article on Brazil's booming economy.  
**Website:** <http://www.independent.co.uk>

## New Weapon Against Crime in the South

Crime in the South's fast-growing cities has a negative affect on economic development and social and community harmony. In Africa, with one fifth of the world's population, for example, data is very poor on crime and its victims. The absence of good data means prevention and detection of crime is poor, and resources to fight it can't be allocated effectively.

Over 900 million people - almost a sixth of the world's population - now live in urban slums (UN) - high-tension places that offer a fertile environment for crime to flourish. In developing countries 43 per cent of urban dwellers live in slums - and in the least-developed countries the figure is 78 per cent. Keeping these areas safe is a serious challenge, especially when trust in police and local authorities is low. People are often afraid of how police will react to reporting of crime. Many rightly believe they will be asked for a bribe, or that reporting a crime somehow singles them out as a troublemaker.

Harnessing the power of people organizing together offers one way of fighting back against crime, and combating the paralysis of feeling there is nothing that can be done. An initiative in Brazil is turning to the powerful collaborative potential of Web 2.0 to track crime and help to solve it. And for the first time in history, Brazilians can now see in more or less real time

what crime there is and where it is happening in their country.

[Wikicrimes](#), the brainchild of [Professor Vasco Furtado](#) of the University of Fortaleza's Knowledge Engineering Research Group, is inspired by the very popular user-contributed encyclopaedia [Wikipedia](#), and germinated in his mind while on an academic sabbatical at Stanford University in California in 2006.

Victims of crime can simply map and report crimes using the website, which uses brightly coloured drawing pins to indicate where a cluster of crimes has taken place. Site users answer a series of questions on suspects and witnesses. Anyone planning a journey can then easily zoom in on the places where they will go, and see the crime profile of that area - and perhaps be more cautious and aware to avoid becoming victims themselves.

Brazil's crime problem is huge: Films like [City of God](#) – where gangs fight deadly battles in the slums or favelas – shows how vicious it is.

Wikicrimes, whose motto is "Share crime information, Keep safe!", began development in April 2006, and went 'live' with a launch at the end of 2007. Starting with just two employees, it has now grown to a team of 10.

Furtado was frustrated with police hoarding crime statistics in Brazil, and not letting people know where crimes were taking place: he also believes the police, as in many other countries, manipulate statistics for various political purposes. "The traditional mechanism of data-gathering for which police are responsible ends up giving them a monopoly over the handling of information on criminal occurrences," Furtado said. And that "is not always in keeping with the precept of transparency and public availability of information required by a democratic system."

Furtado believes transparent crime statistics are vital to a well-functioning democracy.

"We are still facing very big challenges," he said. "Cultural change is one of them. We don't have in Brazil the culture of sharing information for benefiting others. People need to realize that when they register a crime they are helping others, and that should be the reason others will act in the same fashion."

He tried to get the police involved in the project, by contributing data, but with no luck. Brazil's police argue their monopoly over crime statistics exists for some very serious reasons. "We are very worried about revealing police data which may restrict the work of the police," Antenor Martins of Rio's Civil Police Department told the BBC. "Also we don't want a feeling of insecurity for the people - they don't deserve that here or anywhere else in the world."

Many also worry about a crime profile of an area dragging that area down, scaring people away. The police also worry about inaccurate information. "When people walk into a police station, you sign an incident report. If you give information which isn't true, you have to respond to charges of giving false evidence," said Martins.

But Furtado believes trust between citizens and the police is so low, it is hurting the fight against crime.

"The police suffer a lack of credibility among the populace which, in turn, contributes toward the low rate of reporting such occurrences: the so-called underreporting effect," he said. "Research conducted with victims of crime in several Brazilian states has shown that underreporting may, in densely-populated areas, reach up to 50 per cent for certain types of crimes."

Furtado believes a better picture of crime will lead to better public policies and policing: "The result of this can be disastrous in terms of formulation of public policies and especially in the planning of police actions, in view of the fact that the official criminal mapping may reflect a trend that is quite unlike what is actually occurring in real life."

"Wikicrimes intends to change the traditional logic of handling information on crimes that have already occurred, and considers that such a change is up to the citizens themselves. It is based on the principle that with adequate support, citizens will be capable of deciding how and when historical information on criminal occurrences can be publicized as well as for what purpose."

Sao-Paulo-based NGO Sou de Paz works to reduce violence in Brazil, and is a big supporter of Wikicrimes. "If we develop Wikicrimes, we can look at things like domestic violence or information on drug trafficking - things that affect communities but that people don't report either because of shame or fear," the group's Denis Mzne told the BBC. "If you can get access to this information or publicise it together with Wikicrimes, it could help in areas that suffer most from violent crime."

Wisely, Wikicrimes is acting to address police concerns over accurate reporting of crimes.

"Technically the big challenge is to define mechanisms to identify false registering," Furtado said. "We are creating fields in Wikicrimes for the user to provide further information that brings more reliability to the crime information registered – links to newspapers, for instance. We are also defining algorithms to compute the reputation of the informants."

And Wikicrimes is not just for Brazil: they want people from around the world to add to the site and help build up the crime profile of all countries.

Furtado said responses from the general public have largely been positive. "The best I could ever hope," he said. "The project is for the citizen and I feel that they realize this. Every day, I receive messages from people offering support and giving congratulations."

"I had no idea of similar projects before doing Wikicrimes, but, recently, I have received some messages of similar initiatives even though with a local scope in Brazil, Argentina and USA," he added.

"In terms of crime it would be nice if this would show that it's necessary to publish the crime data that we have in law authorities and institutions," he said. "If this is a success, I am sure that all the crime data will be available for people,

because they will realize there is no way that the authorities can keep it all to themselves."

Furtado keeps a rolling report on progress with Wikicrimes on his [blog](#).

#### LINKS:

- Professor Vasco Furtado gives a video presentation of Wikicrimes -  
[Website: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmNww\\_pi-c&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmNww_pi-c&feature=related)
- Ushahidi: A Kenyan website where people can send in live reports by the web and mobile phones on political violence.  
[Website: www.ushahidi.com](http://www.ushahidi.com)
- Read more about Professor Vasco Furtado:  
[Websites: www.mentores.com.br/vasco](http://www.mentores.com.br/vasco) and [vfurtado.blogspot.com](http://vfurtado.blogspot.com)
- [Mashups.com](http://mashups.com) has the latest news and links to get involved in this new internet phenomenon.
- An excellent set of links to Web 2.0 tools and which ones are free, is here  
[Website: http://www.directimpactnow.com/leadgentools/web2-tools-directory.html](http://www.directimpactnow.com/leadgentools/web2-tools-directory.html)
- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: an excellent resource on trends and statistics.  
[Website: http://www.unodc.org/unodc/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/index.html)

### Window on the World

- **Women and Development**

by Elizabeth King et al, Publisher: Copenhagen Consensus.

[Website: http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/Default.aspx?ID=969](http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/Default.aspx?ID=969)

- **Hunger and Malnutrition**

by Susan Horton et al, Publisher: Copenhagen Consensus.

[Website: http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/Default.aspx?ID=965](http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/Default.aspx?ID=965)

- **Creative Economy Report 2008**

by The Special Unit for South-South Cooperation.

[Website: http://www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=9750&intItemID=2068&lang=1](http://www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=9750&intItemID=2068&lang=1)

- **China Returns to Africa: A Superpower and a Continent Embrace**

ed. By Christopher Alden, Daniel Large and Ricardo de Oliveira, Publisher: C. Hurst and Co.

[Website: www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

- **An Appeal to Reason: A Cool Look at Global Warming**

by Nigel Lawson, Publisher: Gerald Duckworth and Co.

[Website: www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

- **Stuffed and Starved: The Hidden Battle for the World Food System**

by Raj Patel, Publisher: Portobello Books.

[Website: http://stuffedandstarved.org/drupal/frontpage](http://stuffedandstarved.org/drupal/frontpage)

- **Removing Barriers to SME Access to International Markets**

Publisher: OECD Publishing.

[Website: www.oecdbookshop.org](http://www.oecdbookshop.org)

- **Geographical Distributions of Financial Flows to Developing Countries: Disbursements, Commitments, Country Indicators, 2002-2006: 2008 edition**

Publisher: OECD Publishing.

[Website: www.oecdbookshop.org](http://www.oecdbookshop.org)

### Upcoming Events

#### June

- **Green by Design 2008**

*Alexandria, USA (12-13 June 2008)*

—The conference is being created to fill an unmet need in the marketplace for deep insights and best practices on building sustainability into the product development process. Attendees will include corporate directors of sustainability and environmental stewardship; directors of product development and design; executives responsible for supply chain management, business strategy and marketing as well as students and educators from prominent design schools.

[Website: www.greenbydesign08.com](http://www.greenbydesign08.com)

- **International Youth Crime Prevention and Cities Summit**

*Durban, South Africa (17-21 June 2008)*

—Hosted by the provincial government of KwaZulu-Natal and UN-HABITAT.

The objective is to prevent and reduce crime and violence in our cities, towns and villages. Designed for young people

and local authorities who work with them, this four-day event will enable all participants to mobilize, to learn, to experience, to speak, and to act.

**Website:** [www.unhsp.org](http://www.unhsp.org)

■ **Nollywood Foundation Convention**

*Los Angeles, USA (20-22 June 2008)*

—The yearly convention and conference to promote Nollywood. With speakers and workshops.

**Website:** <http://www.nollywoodfoundation.org/home.php>

■ **Singapore International Water Week 2008**

*Singapore (23-27 June 2008)*

—This event will bring policymakers, industry leaders, experts and practitioners together to address challenges, showcase technologies, discover opportunities and celebrate achievements in the water world.

**Website:** [www.siww.com.sg/home/index.php](http://www.siww.com.sg/home/index.php)

■ **5th Annual Islamic Finance Asia Summit**

*Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (23-24 June 2008)*

—Competition to become the next Islamic finance hub may lead to cooperation to evolve Asia's regional role in Islamic finance. At the same time, Islamic financial products are becoming more innovative and new asset classes are continuously being launched to capitalise on this booming market fuelled by the oil-rich Middle East. Come and hear the most senior and distinguished representatives from across the region debate the most pressing issues. Don't miss this rare opportunity to engage them on the challenges of how to move the Islamic finance industry forward.

**Website:** <http://www.euromoneyseminars.com/EventDetails/14345/642/5th-Annual-Islamic-Finance-Asia-Summit.html>

## July

■ **Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning**

*London, UK (13-17 July 2008)*

—Applications are invited for participation in the Forum. It has grown to become one of the world's leading conferences on learning and global development. This year, it will explore how open and distance learning can help achieve international development goals and education for all.

**Website:** [wwwpcf5.london.ac.uk](http://wwwpcf5.london.ac.uk)

■ **Making Markets Work – a Two-Week Training Programme**

*Glasgow, UK (13-26 July 2008)*

—This unique programme focuses directly on a key challenge facing governments and development agencies: how to make markets function more effectively for business and for poor people? The programme builds on the Springfield Centre's successful record in offering training on the market development approach to more than 700 people over the last nine years.

The closing date for applications is **Wednesday 21st May 2008**. However please note that they are offering an early registration discount for applications and fees received by **Wednesday 9th April 2008**.

**Website:** [www.springfieldcentre.com](http://www.springfieldcentre.com)

■ **2nd General Assembly and Conference of African Council for Distance Education**

*Lagos, Nigeria (8-11 July 2008)*

—Sponsored by the African Council for Distance Education and the National Open University of Nigeria.

**Website:** [nou.du.ng](http://nou.du.ng)

## August

■ **World Water Week 2008**

*Stockholm, Sweden (17-23 August 2008)*

—The World Water Week in Stockholm is the leading annual global meeting place for capacity-building, partnership-building and follow-up on the implementation of international processes and programmes in water and development. The theme of the week is "Progress and Prospects on Water: For a Clean and Healthy World", including a Special Focus on Sanitation.

**Website:** [www.worldwaterweek.org](http://www.worldwaterweek.org)

■ **2nd International Conference: Third Sector Innovation: Sustainability and Social Impact**

*Sao Paulo, Brazil (18 August 2008)*

—The focus this year is to continue to raise the profile of the valuable work of social enterprise leaders across Latin America, to share best practices and cases of social innovations.

**Email:** [joao.paulo@gesc.org.br](mailto:joao.paulo@gesc.org.br) or [ashpak@umich.edu](mailto:ashpak@umich.edu)

## September

■ **African Carbon Forum**

*Dakar, Senegal (3-5 September 2008)*

—Responding to calls for more clean development mechanism (CDM) projects in Africa and growing carbon market interest in the continent, partner UN agencies and the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA) will organize a carbon forum in Senegal under the umbrella of the Nairobi Framework.

■ **8th Asia Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production**

*Cebu, Philippines (18-20 September 2008)*

—APRCP's approach is to promote technology and information exchange, and to encourage cooperation and

partnerships among government, industry, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations. APRCP's mission is to provide leadership and support that will enhance information flow and human resource development, and will strengthen public-private partnership to stimulate the promotion and implementation of cleaner production strategies and technologies in the region.

**Website:** [www.aprcp.org/roundtables/8th.htm](http://www.aprcp.org/roundtables/8th.htm)

■ **TEDAfrica: A gathering of the greatest thinkers and doers from Africa and the world**

*Cape Town, South Africa (29 September to 1 October 2008)*

—What if Africa had no borders? What if her boundaries extended as far as those living in the diaspora, or even further? What if you could fly directly from Cape Town to Cairo, Lagos to Luanda, Bujumbura to Abuja? Or what if you could drive to every city and every town and every village? What if the Internet was a reality for every African? What if you could call the world from atop the Kilimanjaro, or from deep in the forests of the Congo?

**Website:** [tedafrica](http://tedafrica)

■ **2008 Global Youth Enterprise Conference**

*Washington DC, USA (15-16 September 2008)*

—Making Cents International is excited to announce that the Global Youth Enterprise Conference will take place in Washington, DC September 15th-16th, 2008 at the Cafritz Conference Center. Designed as a participatory learning event, this conference aims to support youth enterprise and entrepreneurship programs and policies achieve greater effectiveness around the world. It will build on the outcomes of the first-ever Global Youth Microenterprise Conference, which Making Cents International organized for 270 practitioners, policymakers, educators, youth, and members of the private sector from 28 countries in September 2007. Making Cents is planning this year for 350 participants to share their promising practices, unique approaches, and groundbreaking ideas that help youth develop the necessary skills and opportunities to start their own businesses or seek quality employment. We invite you to submit a proposal, become a sponsor or exhibitor, and/or register!

**Email:** [conference@makingcents.com](mailto:conference@makingcents.com)

**Website:** [www.youthenterpriseconference.org](http://www.youthenterpriseconference.org)

## October

■ **World Conservation Congress 2008**

*Barcelona, Spain (5-14 October 2008)*

—Held every four years, the World Conservation Congress is one of the world's most important events devoted to improving our natural environment for human, social and economic development. More than 8,000 leaders from governments, NGOs, business, UN agencies, scientific domains and community groups are expected to attend.

**Website:** [www.iucn.org/congress/2008/index.htm](http://www.iucn.org/congress/2008/index.htm)

■ **WEFTEC 2008**

*Chicago, USA (18-22 October 2008)*

—The Water Environment Federation's Annual Technical Exhibition and Conference, is the largest conference of its kind in North America and offers water quality professionals from around the world with outstanding water quality education and training.

**Website:** [www.weftec.org/home.htm](http://www.weftec.org/home.htm)

■ **BioMarine 2008**

*Marseille, France (20-24 October 2008)*

—Biomarine is a worldwide initiative that helps nurturing innovative solutions to advance ocean sustainability bringing together business, science, government, civil society and the media. This Forum is the official marine event of the French Presidency of the European Union.

**Website:** [www.biomarine.org/](http://www.biomarine.org/)

## November

■ **Fourth Session of the World Urban Forum**

*Nanjing, China (3-7 November 2008)*

—The World Urban Forum was established by the United Nations to examine one of the most pressing issues facing the world today: rapid urbanization and its impact on communities, cities, economies and policies. It is projected that in the next fifty years, two-thirds of humanity will be living in towns and cities. A major challenge is to minimize burgeoning poverty in cities, improve the urban poor's access to basic facilities such as shelter, clean water and sanitation and achieve environment-friendly, sustainable urban growth and development.

**Website:** [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)

■ **South Africa: The Power of Movements – Announcement and call for proposals**

*Cape Town, South Africa (14-17 November 2008)*

—Up to 1,500 women's rights activists from around the world will gather to debate and strategize about how to build a stronger global women's movement. Proposals are sought for organizing a session.

**Website:** [www.awid.org](http://www.awid.org)

## Training Opportunities

### ONGOING

- **Microenterprise and Development Institute New Hampshire 2008**

*Manchester, New Hampshire, USA (8-21 June 2008)*

**REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN**

—The MDI New Hampshire offers another highly relevant programme for microfinance and community development practitioners. The two-week programme presents 19 courses in three Knowledge Tracks: Microfinance, Pro-Poor Enterprise Development and Community Economic Development. Academic credit and Masters degree options are available.

**Email:** [w.maddocks@snhu.edu](mailto:w.maddocks@snhu.edu)

**Telephone:** 603-644-3124

**Website:** [www mdi-nh.org](http://www mdi-nh.org)

- **Grameen Bank Microcredit Training Programs**

[Grameen Info](#)

## CAREERS

- **New Website Offers Career Advice to Young Africans**

—Set up by the Commonwealth Secretariat, Africancareerguidance.com is aimed at providing career guidance to African youth and helping them to link with prospective employers. AfricaRecruit is a human resources organisation that provides skills training for African professionals in the Diaspora and on the continent. The website has an inbuilt email subscriber list for all its users and offers a searchable database of career profiles for job seekers and prospective employers. It also offers skills and interest assessments and advice on CV and résumé preparation. It provides tips about interviewing techniques, as well as information on internship and volunteer opportunities, and entrepreneurial skills.

**Website:** [www.africacareerguidance.com](http://www.africacareerguidance.com)

## FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- **Institute of Social Studies in The Hague**

—A collaboration between 25 international think tanks in international development, [www.focuss.info](http://www.focuss.info) is a search engine for indexing and social bookmarking online resources in international development.

**Website:** <http://focuss.info/>

- **Funding - Google.org**

—While SMEs in rich countries represent half of GDP, they are largely absent from the formal economies of developing countries. Today, there are trillions of investment dollars chasing returns – and SMEs are a potentially high impact, high return investment. However, only a trickle of this capital currently reaches SMEs in developing countries. Our goal is to increase this flow.

We want to show that SMEs can be profitable investments. We will do this by focusing on lowering transaction costs, deepening capital markets to increase liquidity, and catalyzing capital for investment. **Website:** [www.google.org](http://www.google.org)

- **Africa Entrepreneurship Platform**

—This ground breaking initiative is created as a forum to showcase innovative ideas and businesses from Africa that have the ability to scale internationally driving job creation and sustainable economic development between Africa and the Americas.

**Website:** [www.sacca.biz](http://www.sacca.biz)

- **Piramal Foundation in India**

—Has established a US \$25,000 prize for ideas that help advance full access to effective public health care in India. The Piramal Prize is a \$25,000 Social Entrepreneurship Competition focused on democratizing health care in India that seeks to encourage and support bold entrepreneurial ideas which can profoundly impact access to higher standards of health for India's rural and marginalized urban communities. The award recognizes high-impact, scalable business models and innovative solutions that directly or indirectly address India's health-care crisis.

**Website:** [www.piramalprize.org](http://www.piramalprize.org)

- **The Pioneers of Prosperity Grant and Award**

—This competition is a partnership between the OTF Group and the John F. Templeton Foundation of the United States, and promotes companies in East Africa by identifying local role models that act as examples of sustainable businesses in their country/region. It is open to businesses from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda.

Five pioneers will receive US \$50,000 to re-invest in their business. It is open to for-profit businesses that provide high wages to their workers and that operate in sustainable ways.

**Website:** [Pioneers of Prosperity](#)

- **African Writers Fund**

—Together with the Ford Foundation, the Fund supports the work of independent creative writers living on the continent. The Fund recognizes the vital role that poets and novelists play in Africa by anticipating and reflecting the cultural,

economic and political forces that continuously shape and reshape societies.

**Website:** <http://www.trustafica.org>

■ **Joint NAM S&T Centre - ICCS Fellowship Programme**

—Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (NAM S&T Centre) and International Center for Chemical Sciences (ICCS), (H.E.J. Research Institute of Chemistry and Dr. Panjwani Center for Molecular Medicine and Drug Research), University of Karachi, Karachi, Pakistan

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[apknam@gmail.com](mailto:apknam@gmail.com);

**Website:** <http://www.scidev.net>; <http://www.namstct.org>

■ **Oxford Said Business School Youth Business Development Competition**

—Open to youth between 16 and 21 across the world, the competition is run by students at Oxford University to promote social enterprise. A prize fund of £2,000 in seed capital is up for grabs. It calls itself the 'world's first global youth development competition'.

[Click here for more information](#)

■ **US\$250,000 for Best Lab Design**

—AMD and Architecture for Humanity have announced a prize of \$250,000 for the best design for a computer lab that can be adapted and implemented in third-world countries.

The Open Architecture Prize is the largest prize in the field of architecture and is designed to be a multi-year program that will draw competition from design teams around the world.

**Website:** <http://www.openarchitecturenetwork.org/>

■ **PhD Plant Breeding Scholarships at the University of Ghana**

The [University of Ghana](#) has been awarded a project support grant by the [Alliance for a Green Revolution](#) in Africa (a joint venture between the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation, for the establishment of a West African Centre for Crop Improvement (WACCI). This is available to scientists working at NARIs, universities and international centres in West Africa. Women scientists are especially encouraged to apply for a fellowship under this programme.

**Website:** <http://www.acci.org.za>

■ **Genesis: India's Premier Social Entrepreneurship Competition**

—A social entrepreneurship competition aiming to bring together social entrepreneurs, students, NGOs, innovators, incubators, corporations and financiers and encourage them to come up with innovative ideas which are socially relevant and feasible.

**Website:** <http://genesis.iitm.ac.in>

■ **Echoing Green: Social Entrepreneurs Fund**

—They are looking for social entrepreneurs developing new solutions to social problems. They are accepting applications for their 2008 fellowships (two-year funding of up to US \$90,000 for 20 entrepreneurs).

**Website:** <http://www.echoingreen.org>

■ **2008 Sustainable Banking Awards**

—The Financial Times, in partnership with IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank Group, today launched the 2008 edition of the FT Sustainable Banking Awards, the leading awards for triple bottom line banking.

Two new categories - Banking at the Bottom of the Pyramid, and Sustainable Investor of the Year - have been added to the ground-breaking programme.

The awards, now in their third year, were created by the FT and IFC to recognise banks that have shown leadership and innovation in integrating social, environmental and corporate governance objectives into their operations.

**Website:** <http://www.ifc.org>

■ **Challenge InnoCentive**

—A challenge to the world's inventors to find solutions to real scientific and technological problems affecting the poor and vulnerable.

**Website:** <http://www.innocentive.com>

[You can read more about the challenges here: <http://www.rockfound.org>](#)

■ **Global Social Benefit Incubator: A US \$20,000 Bottom of the Pyramid Scholarship**

—Offered by Santa Clara University's Global Social Benefit Incubator, it selects 15 to 20 enterprises from developing countries and provides an eight-month mentoring process. This ends with a 10-day process in Santa Clara, where

entrepreneurs work with their mentors.

**Website:** [www.socialedge.org](http://www.socialedge.org)

## Job Opportunities

- [Africa Recruit Job Compendium](#)
- [Africa Union](#)
- [CARE](#)
- [Christian Children's Fund](#)
- [ECOWAS](#)
- [International Crisis Group](#)
- [International Medical Corps](#)
- [International Rescue Committee](#)
- [Internews](#)
- [IREX](#)
- [Organization for International Migration](#)
- [Oxfam](#)
- [Relief Web Job Compendium \(UN OCHA\) \(1\)](#)
- [Relief Web Job Compendium \(UN OCHA\) \(2\)](#)
- [Save the Children](#)
- [The Development Executive Group job compendium](#)
- [Trust Africa](#)
- [UN Jobs](#)
- [UNDP](#)
- [UNESCO](#)
- [UNICEF](#)
- [World Bank](#)
- [World Wildlife Fund \(Cameroon\)](#)

Please feel free to send your comments, feedback and/or suggestions to Cosmas Gitta  
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